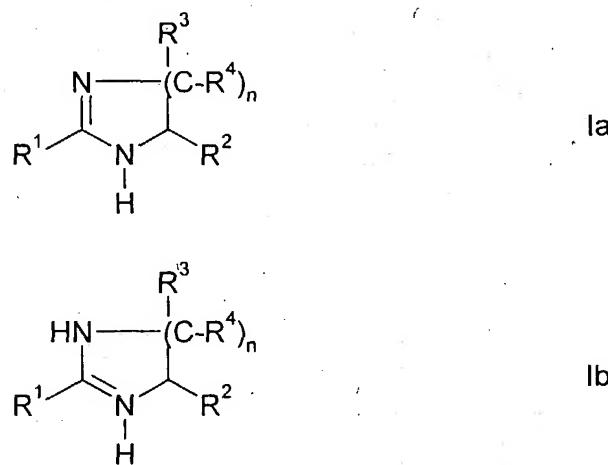


**The Claims:**

1. A method of treating and protecting the skin of a human patient having skin with high exogenous surfactant concentration, wherein the surfactant is a fatty acid sulfate, with the exception of sodium dodecyl sulfate, a betaine, an alkylbenzene sulphonate, a fatty acid ether sulfate, an alkylpolyglycoside, or a salt thereof where such salt exists, comprising
  - a) administering, for a time sufficient to eliminate said high surfactant concentration, a composition comprising at least one compound of the formulae Ia or Ib



or a physiologically compatible salt thereof, or a stereoisomeric form thereof,  
wherein

R<sup>1</sup> is H or alkyl,

R<sup>2</sup> is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH-R<sup>5</sup>,

R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are in each case independently of one another H or OH,

n is 1, 2 or 3,

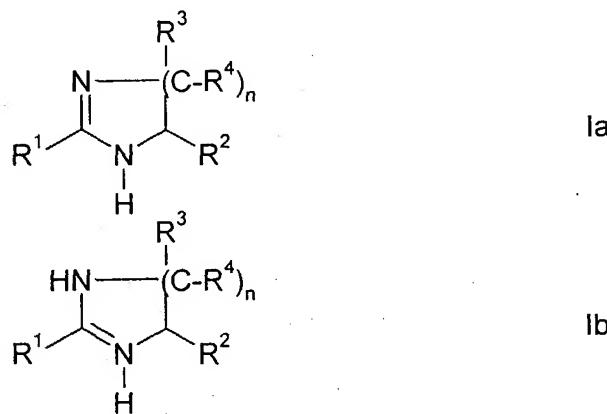
alkyl is an alkyl radical having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and

R<sup>5</sup> is H, alkyl, or an amino acid radical, dipeptide radical or tripeptide radical  
and

- b) thereafter continuing to administer the composition to protect the skin from said high surfactant concentration.

2. A method of protecting the skin of a human patient from exogenous high surfactant concentration, comprising:

administering, to a patient whose skin is in need of protection from high surfactant concentration, a composition comprising at least one compound of the formulae Ia or Ib



or a physiologically compatible salt thereof, or a stereoisomeric form thereof,  
wherein

$R^1$  is H or alkyl,

$R^2$  is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH- $R^5$ ,

$R^3$  and  $R^4$  are in each case independently of one another H or OH,

$n$  is 1, 2 or 3,

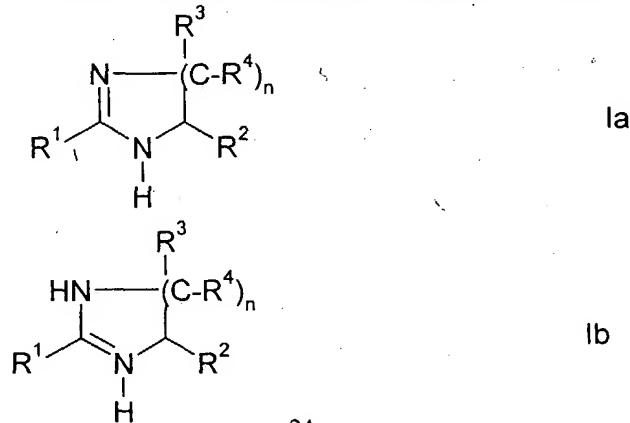
alkyl is an alkyl radical having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and

$R^5$  is H, alkyl, or an amino acid radical, dipeptide radical or tripeptide radical,

wherein the composition does not contain a surfactant, and wherein said exogenous surfactant is not sodium dodecyl sulfate.

3. A method of protecting the skin of a human patient from high exogenous surfactant concentration, comprising:

administering, to a patient whose skin is in need of protection from high surfactant concentration, a composition comprising at least one compound of the formulae Ia or Ib



or a physiologically compatible salt thereof, or a stereoisomeric form thereof,  
wherein

R<sup>1</sup> is H or alkyl,

R<sup>2</sup> is H, COOH, COO-alkyl or CO-NH-R<sup>5</sup>,

R<sup>3</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are in each case independently of one another H or OH,

n is 1, 2 or 3,

alkyl is an alkyl radical having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and

R<sup>5</sup> is H, alkyl, or an amino acid radical, dipeptide radical or tripeptide radical,  
wherein the composition does not contain said exogenous surfactant and wherein said  
exogenous surfactant is not sodium dodecylsulfate.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the skin of the human patient is  
protected from stress caused by said exogenous surfactant or wherein said stress is prevented.

5. A method according to claim 2, wherein the skin of the human patient is  
protected from stress caused by said exogenous surfactant or wherein said stress is prevented.

6. A method according to claim 3, wherein the skin of the human patient is  
protected from stress caused by said exogenous surfactant or wherein said stress is prevented.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant is sodium lauryl ether  
sulfate, cocoamidopropylbetaine, alkylpolyglucosides, benzalkonium chloride, sodium  
laurylsulfate, ammonium laurylsulfate, or cocodimethylbetaine, or a salt thereof where such  
salt exists.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the surfactant is sodium lauryl ether  
sulfate, cocoamidopropylbetaine, alkylpolyglucosides, or benzalkonium chloride or a salt  
thereof where such salt exists.

9. A method according to claim 4, wherein the proteins and/or biomembranes in  
the human skin or the microflora of the skin are protected from said stress.

10. A method according to claim 5, wherein the proteins and/or biomembranes in the human skin or the microflora of the skin are protected from said stress.

11. A method according to claim 6, wherein the proteins and/or biomembranes in the human skin or the microflora of the skin are protected from said stress.

12. A method according to claim 4, wherein the skin barrier is stabilized from said stress.

13. A method according to claim 5, wherein the skin barrier is stabilized from said stress.

14. A method according to claim 6, wherein the skin barrier is stabilized from said stress.

15. A method according to claim 1, wherein the composition is a cosmetic composition that is an external application formulation in the form of a solution, a suspension, an emulsion, a paste, an ointment, a gel, a cream, a lotion, a powder, a soap, a surfactant-containing cleansing preparation, an oil, a lipstick, a lipcare stick, a mascara, an eyeliner, an eyeshadow, a blusher, a powder, an emulsion or wax foundation, a sunscreen, a presun or aftersun preparation or a spray.

16. A method according to claim 1, wherein the proportion of the compound of formulae Ia or Ib, a physiologically compatible salt thereof, or a stereoisomeric form thereof, is from 0.0001 to 50% by weight, based on the total cosmetic formulation.

17. A method according to claim 1, wherein said compound is (S)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydro-2-methyl-4-pyrimidinecarboxylic acid or (S,S)-1,4,5,6-tetrahydro-5-hydroxy-2-methyl-4-pyrimidinecarboxylic acid.